

National Preparedness Month 2011

This September: A Time to Remember. A Time to Prepare.

National Preparedness Month is the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) annual campaign to encourage Americans to take steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, schools, organizations, businesses, and communities. National Preparedness Month is sponsored by FEMA's *Ready Campaign*, a campaign that promotes preparedness and provides free preparedness information and resources, in partnership with the Citizen Corps whose local councils bring together government and community leaders to involve all citizens in emergency preparedness planning.

The goal for this September's National Preparedness Month is to turn awareness into action by motivating all Americans to make an emergency preparedness plan. FEMA relies on federal, state, and local partnerships and its Coalition Members to help bring this call to action to all communities throughout the U.S. The health and medical community can play a key role in National Preparedness Month by encouraging hospitals, medical and health facilities, and child care facilities to join this national emergency preparedness effort.

National Preparedness Month Coalition

Sign up to be a National Preparedness Month Coalition Member! Coalition Membership is easy, free, and important and is open to all individuals, businesses, and organizations. Register your department at community.fema.gov and encourage your stakeholders to do the same! Members have access to ready-to-use templates and messaging, tons of ideas and information, and the ability to connect with the thousands of other members across the country. From helping their community make emergency preparedness plans, to spreading the preparedness message, to coordinating practices and drills, Coalition Members help promote a whole community approach to emergency management and ensure that their community is prepared to face and respond to emergencies and disasters. Help us encourage everyone to sign up at community.fema.gov. Here are a few easy ways to participate:

✓ **Leverage Existing Events**

Participate in events and meetings that already exist within your community. Tie in preparedness messages and presentation to events hosted or sponsored by local hospitals and medical facilities. Tap into any of the Department of Health and Human Services [preparedness initiatives](#) in your community. Whether it's setting up a booth to pass out information or asking nurses and clinics to hand out preparedness information to patients, tapping into already planned and scheduled events can be a great way to reach members of your community.

✓ **Host an Event, Meeting, or Workshop**

Host an event, such as a preparedness workshop, day, or fair. You may even consider by hosting a preparedness fair at your local hospital. You could invite a local first responder to talk about preparedness, or consider giving CPR training in the community. You could also host an event at your hospital in which citizens could build their own medical emergency kit and learn how to be prepared medically.

✓ **Be Part of a Much Larger Event or Initiative**

People want to be part of something bigger. For example, September 11th is now an annual day of service and this year will mark the ten year anniversary of the terrorist attacks. Use this year's day of service to add a preparedness event, or find events already existing to tap into to make sure your entire community is prepared to face and respond to all types of disasters and emergencies.

✓ **Spread the Preparedness Message**

Include preparedness messaging in existing forms of communications, such as emails, websites, blogs, social media, newsletters, and even as bill stuffers. We have messaging that is ready for use or customization. Email npm@fema.gov for more information, or sign up to be a Coalition Member where you will receive access to the toolkit that contains sample messaging.

The Health and Human Services Community's Involvement

Here are a few ideas for how the health and human services community can be part of this national preparedness effort, making a difference by bringing preparedness to their community:

- ✓ **Encourage Hospitals and Medical Facilities to host a Preparedness Day.** A preparedness day at a local hospital is a great way to inform both staff and patients about preparedness. The day could feature presentations from local emergency responders, volunteers that come to help patients make their own preparedness plans, and practice drills and exercises that include both the hospital and their local emergency response and fire department.
- ✓ **Motivate childcare facilities and pre-schools to take the necessary steps towards emergency preparedness.** Engage childcare facilities, head start programs, and pre-schools across the country to ensure that they know what to do should an emergency or disaster strike, and making sure they communicate their plans to the families of those they take care of. You could ask them to pledge to pass out emergency preparedness information, contact their local emergency response team to make sure they are aware of their community's plan, or participate in a larger preparedness event, such as a future Shakeout Earthquake Drill. Visit Shakeout.org for more information and to find upcoming drills.
- ✓ **Engage the Access or Functional Needs Community.** In recent years, we've seen great strides being taken across the U.S. to bring more equal and fair treatment to those with access and functional needs. This National Preparedness Month is a great time to engage the access and functional needs community to take the necessary steps towards emergency preparedness, which may include notifying their local fire department or emergency response team.
- ✓ **Launch a preparedness initiative or effort.** Encourage the health and human services community throughout the U.S. to launch a preparedness initiative and kick it off this September, in honor of National Preparedness Month.

Available Resources:

- ✓ Community.fema.gov. Join us as a National Preparedness Month Coalition Member where you will have access to ideas and ready-to-use messaging, including press releases, posters, graphics, web banners, social media messaging, articles, best practices from 2010, and much more.
- ✓ Ready.gov/America. Ready has resources such as checklists, games, and additional information for kids, patients, staff and parents.
- ✓ PHE.gov/preparedness. *Public Health Emergency and Medical Emergency Staff* have helpful resources and guides for medical preparedness.
- ✓ ReadyRating.org. The American Red Cross Ready Rating Program helps organizations take the necessary steps to become prepared to respond to and successfully withstand a disaster and other emergencies.
- ✓ MedicalReserveCorps.gov. The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) engages volunteers to strengthen public health, emergency response, and community resiliency.

For more information and ideas, contact NPM@fema.gov.